

Osage County Health Department  
103 E 9th  
Lyndon, Kansas 66451

Office of the Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
Room 222  
1919 M. Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

FCC MAIL ROOM  
DEC 24 1996

Reference: CC Docket No. 96-45

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing in regards to the 1996 Telecommunications Act and the important ramifications it has for rural public health departments. As a rural Kansas County Health Officer, I am charged with the responsibility for protecting and promoting the health and well being for all the residents of Osage County. I believe the ability to communicate electronically throughout the state and nation is essential for the protection and service for public health.

Local health departments play a vital role in our nations health care system. Local health departments are charged with the responsibility to prevent and contain infectious diseases, epidemics, and to respond to public health threats and natural disasters. In these situations, access to the most up to date information from Federal health agencies such as the Center for Disease Control and the Food and Drug Administration is critical. Receiving information from these and other health services in a timely manner is imperative for developing a systematic and comprehensive public health response at the local and community level. Improved access through telecommunication linkages for local health departments is essential for the provision of public health protection and will help to save lives.

It is a great asset to American Public Health that local health departments are included in the 1996 Telecommunications Acts. The linkage of all our nations local health departments will provide a public health information infrastructure which will serve and protect all Americans.

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Please contact me for any further information which would be of assistance to the FCC in making their determination regarding this matter.

Most Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sandra Wright RN".

Sandra Wright, R.N.  
Osage County Health Officer

CC: NACCHO

Nancy Rawding, Executive Director  
440 First St. N.W. Suite 500  
Washington, D.C. 20001

NACCHO

Questions to Address:

1. Name of Project:

Osage County Health Department

2. Please list each of the project's sites:

| Name of Site:             | State in which it is located |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| <u>Main Office</u>        | <u>Lyndon, Kansas</u>        |
| <u>Satellite/Outreach</u> | <u>Carbondale, Kansas</u>    |
|                           | <u>Osage City, Kansas</u>    |
|                           | <u>Burlingame, Kansas</u>    |
|                           | <u>Overbrook, Kansas</u>     |
|                           | <u>Melvorn, Kansas</u>       |

Please answer the following questions for each of your sites. Use additional sheets if necessary.

3. What is the nearest city of population equal to or greater than 50,000 in your state, and approximately how far are you from its boundary ?

City: Topeka, Ks. Distance from city boundary: 30 miles.

4. Name of the project's telecommunications service provider: Sprint United Telephone

5. Level of telecommunications service the project is currently using: (for example, voice grade, 144Kpbs (ISDN) 384 Kbps, T-1 or equivalent)

6. Charges for telecommunications service:

Is there a monthly charge? No ☐ Yes ☐

If yes, how much is the charge ? \_\_\_\_\_

Is there a usage-based charge ? No ☐ Yes ☐

If yes, how much is the charge? \_\_\_\_\_

Is there a distance component (such as a per-mile fee) of the charge? No ☐ Yes ☐

If yes, how much is the charge ? \_\_\_\_\_

Was there an installation fee? No ☐ Yes ☐

If yes, how much was the charge? \_\_\_\_\_

Is the charge the regular tariffed rate, or is there a discount from the telecommunications provider?

Tariffed \_\_\_\_\_ Discount \_\_\_\_\_

If there is a discount, how much is it? \_\_\_\_\_

7. How does the project use telecommunications in the delivery of health care? (For example--to send x-rays, distribute public information, or perform video consultations. Please identify any occasional or episodic uses, such as might result from an outbreak of disease)

Only current service is through faximille and modem hook-up. Communicable disease information is distributed when appropriate and information from the Center for Disease Control is accessed on modem line using the CDC. Wonder System. Video linkage is not available at our facility.

8. Could the project provide the services it is currently providing with less bandwidth have? (The implications of using greater or lesser levels of telecommunications services are related to image transmission time. What would be the impact if the health care activities for which you now use telecommunications took twice as long, or if they could be completed in half the time?)

Access to public health information such as disaster protocols and the most up to date disease outbreak control measure is essential for the protection and safety of our communities. In essence time saved could virtually mean lives saved.

9. What would the implications of having a greater level of bandwidth be?

Unable to answer

10. Do you have e-mail? No \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_

11. Do you have internet access? No \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_

If yes, do you incur long-distance charges by using it?

No \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_

Please estimate your number of hours of Internet use per month: \_\_\_\_\_

12. If you have access to the Internet, please list any purposes other than e-mail (such as accessing databases such as Lexis/Nexis) for which you use it:

Access to documents, Disease control protocols, and Emergency and Disaster protocols along with rapid response for assistance.